

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Appropriations Committee  
For the record, my name is Susan Good Geise G-E-I-S-E

I think I have the best job in the world. I am the librarian in Augusta, population 284, just 78 miles up the road, home of the best one day rodeo ever. Consider coming to the Augusta Rodeo, we sure know how to have a good time. Be sure to bring the family.

When I got this job at the age of 59, my mom was so relieved. I had led a sort of white knuckle life, many years spent here in this building. My mother thought this would be a nice, sedate job, a little dusty perhaps, but something more in keeping with my advancing years. Now, I have done a lot of things in my life, but let me tell you what a rural librarian does, besides checking out books. We do that, too, but it is but a small slice of our daily activities.

Just last week, our library offered notary services to 5 citizens, from an unemployed fellow to our school superintendent, helped a disabled man order a catalog to get some parts to fix his water system, had storytime with some wizbang crafts, assisted two unemployed people to write their resumes, ordered a book for a five year old who is begging his mom to buy him a hound dog, and ordered books to help a woman cook for her husband who has recently been diagnosed with diabetes. Three people used our public computers to file their unemployment, since many Augusta jobs end after hunting season. We helped a college sophomore find an internship that wouldn't cost her parents an arm and a leg.

We helped an 84 year old woman buy a plane ticket to visit her 91 year old sister in Florida. Outside the school, we are the only public entity that has a fax machine that works most of the time. Sunday through Thursday, our library was used by 56 people: bear in mind our population, 284.

Augusta is not unique; the libraries in YOUR hometown do much the same thing on a daily basis. In places where "there is a lot of dirt between lightbulbs" as one of our former US Senators was fond of saying, services are hard to come by, and so your local library steps into the breach to offer the most local, low cost, highly effective services you may have never imagined.

I've brought a small visual aid to demonstrate how far we stretch our dollar. These are actual envelopes that I use to mail books to folks, maybe those in your hometown.

Thank you for your consideration.